

Post Travel Coronavirus Program



Sending Office: Office of the Attending Physician
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TO: All Members of Congress and Staff

FROM: Dr. Brian P. Monahan, Attending Physician

DATE: November 15, 2020

SUBJECT: **Post Travel Coronavirus Program**

In response to rapidly rising cases of coronavirus in the United States, the Mayor of the District of Columbia issued her Travel Order of November 9, 2020 (Mayor's Order 2020-110). The Mayor's order seeks to identify and reduce travel to the District of Columbia by those who are harboring coronavirus infection and are asymptomatic. This letter is intended to provide guidelines to be consistent with the spirit of the Mayor's order. Virtually all areas of the United States meet the Mayor's order threshold for the pre-travel testing. The overall direction to travelers is to obtain a COVID 19 test prior to traveling to Washington, DC, and obtain a second COVID 19 test, 3 to 5 days after your arrival. My office will provide your post arrival test. As a critical infrastructure worker, you may conduct your official business immediately on arrival in the District of Columbia.

Other accompanying persons (spouse or children), who are not critical infrastructure workers, will need to quarantine for the days between their pre-travel COVID 19 test and their day 3 to 5 COVID 19 test here in Washington, DC.

There are specific considerations for individuals such as you and your staff considered to be critical infrastructure workers, for purposes of your Washington DC work activities:

1. Because you have less than 7 days' advance notice of the Mayor's travel order and your travel, you are exempt from the pretravel COVID 19 test requirement at least this first time. I recommend that, if possible, you still obtain a negative COVID 19 test result prior to travelling to Washington, DC. This will reduce the chance of being identified later as having had an asymptomatic infection that would require quarantine or isolation in Washington, DC. Any type of COVID 19 test offered by your local resource will satisfy the Mayor's order. If your COVID 19 test is positive, do not travel to Washington, DC.
2. If you have received instruction from a Public Health Officer that you are in a quarantine status based upon close contact with a known COVID 19 case, you should not travel to Washington DC and you should complete your quarantine at your current residence. A close contact is defined by the Centers for Disease Control as proximity to a known COVID 19 case closer than 6 feet distance for more than 15 minutes cumulatively in a 24-hour interval. Examples of a close contact include a COVID 19 family member that lives in your home, a person you shared an automobile trip with, a person you shared a meal with closer than 6 feet in distance, etc.

3. If you are a local resident, of Washington, DC, Maryland or Virginia and begin your travel from those locations to Washington DC, you do not require any COVID 19 testing.

4. Please remain vigilant in all usual social distancing requirements, hand and contact surface cleansing and use of face covers to reduce spread of coronavirus. Remember that face cover wear (with some exceptions) is required in the District of Columbia, and violations are subject to a fine.

5. Beginning Monday, November 16, the House of Representatives will begin offering post travel RT-PCR coronavirus testing for Members and staff to be consistent with the spirit of the Mayor of the District of Columbia's recent travel order, which included a recommendation to obtain a coronavirus test 3 to 5 days after arrival in Washington. Persons accompanying your travel (spouse or children) will need to obtain their tests at regional commercial sites (see my web site for locations)

This voluntary testing, which is in addition to the medically indicated testing program through the Office of the Attending Physician, will be available at the Capitol at HVC 200 during the following hours:

- **Monday through Friday 08:00 to 12:00**

About the Test

The RT-PCR coronavirus test process is streamlined, rapid, and convenient. Individuals will report to the test center wearing a face cover. After cleansing their hands with waterless hand cleanser at the test center entrance, the individual will receive a video briefing on how they will register with the technician to provide contact information. They will watch a brief video on how perform their own nasal swab test under supervision of medical personnel. Registration information will be confirmed to ensure that we have the preferred contact for notification of results.

A first visit to the testing center will take about 15 minutes, including registration. Any subsequent visits will take less time, since the individual will already be registered.

Average notification time for the results of this test is 6-12 hours. When the result is available from the laboratory, the individual's results are sent as text message or email, along with information about what it means to have a positive or negative test.

Individuals with a *negative* test result need to maintain their strict adherence to social distancing standards and use of face covers as specified. A negative test result does not mean the virus is absent, only that it was not detected. It is possible to still have a small amount of virus that the test did not see. Continued caution is required in the usual conduct of daily life and interaction with others based upon the guidelines for mask wear, social distancing, and daily health self -health screening.

Individuals with a *positive* test result will be contacted to arrange for verification of their result at the Office of Attending Physician and for contact tracing. Additional interaction may occur with public health authorities who by law are notified of test results both positive and negative.

The Office of Attending Physician previously provided guidelines about following mask wearing, social distancing, and daily self-health screening protocols. The current guidelines, Version 3.3 are available on the website: [Attending Physician Pandemic Social Distance Guidelines](#). In addition, The Speaker made an announcement on July 29 regarding entrance to the Hall of the House. Those remain in effect. Please refer to that guidance for additional information on those topics

Physicians on duty will be available at any time to discuss questions surrounding the test or other COVID 19-related topics by calling the Capitol operator at **202-224-2145**.